

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

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USIA-06 OES-03 /109 W

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R 300713Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6301

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

USLO PEKING

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 5103

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CH, US

SUBJECT: TOUR D' HORIZON WITH PRC CHARGE D'AFFAIRES IN CANBERRA

1. I TOOK THE UNUSUAL STEP OF PAYING FAREWELL CALL ON PRC CHARGE D'AFFAIRES CHU CI-CHEN AT PRC EMBASSY BECAUSE I HAD LEARNED FROM SENATOR JOHN WHEELDON, MINISTER FOR SOCIAL SECURITY AND REPATRIATION (VETERANS AFFAIRS), THAT CHU ANXIOUS TO SEE ME, BUT WAS RELUCTANT TO CALL AT EMBASSY. I TOLD CHU MY PURPOSE IN CALLING WAS TO EXPRESS CONCERN FOR HEALTH OF AMBASSADOR WANG KUO-CHUAN, WHO HAD LEFT SOME MONTHS AGO FOR CHINA AND TO SHOW THE IMPORTANCE I ATTACH TO PRC-US RELATIONS. IT WAS CLEAR FROM CHU'S QUESTIONS THAT HE WAS PRIMED FOR GETTING AS MUCH OUT OF THIS CONVERSATION AS POSSIBLE. MY MAIN EFFORT WAS TO KEEP IT A TWO-WAY DISCUSSION.

2. FULL REPORT OF OUR 80- MINUTE CONVERSATION BEING SUBMITTED
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BY AIRGRAM.

3. CHU'S PRINCIPAL QUESTIONS RELATED TO SEA, THE INDIAN OCEAN, RISING SOVIET POWER, AND TO US-AUSTRALIAN RELATIONS; NOTABLY, US FACILITIES IN AUSTRALIA. OMEGA AND FOREIGN INVESTMENT.

4. IN EACH CASE I ASKED FOR HIS VIEWS. LATTER WERE NOTABLE FOR ABSENCE OF CRITICISMS OF US POSITIONS "IN REALITY", ALTHOUGH "IN PRINCIPLE" PRC HAD CONTRARY VIEWS WITH REGARD TO WORLD EQUILIBRIUM, OVERSEAS BASES, ZONES OF PEACE, FOREIGN INVESTMENT. WHEN I ASKED HIM HOW PRC VIEWED SEATO, HE SAID THAT OF COURSE SEATO HAD AT ONE TIME BEEN DIRECTED AGAINST CHINA, BUT THIS WAS NO LONGER THE CASE. THINGS HAD CHANGED IN SEA. CLEAR IMPLICATION OF HIS REMARKS AND EXPRESSION SUGGESTED TO ME THAT CHINA WOULD NOT LIKE TO SEE SEATO DISAPPEAR TOO FAST. (I MENTIONED THIS AND ONE OR TWO OTHER POINTS ABOUT MY CONVIERSATION WITH CHU TO PRIMIN WHITLAM EVENING OF JULY 29.)

5. AT SEVERAL POINTS CHU ASKED WHY I ATTACHED SUCH IMPORTANCE TO THAILAND AND TO THAI-PRC RELATIONS (AS I HAD). I RESPONDED THAT THAILAND WAS THE BIGGEST AND MOST CENTRALLY LOCATED COUNTRY IN MAINLAND SEA. CLEARLY THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE POTENTIAL FOR IMPROVED PRC-THIA RELATIONS, BUT DISTRUST OF CHINA REMAINED IN THAILAND DUE TO PEKING BORADCASTS AND TO CHINA'S TRAINING SUPPORT FOR INSURGENTS IN THAILAND. I WAS STRUCK THAT CHU DID NOT TAKE EXCEPTION TO MY REMARKS, NOT EVEN OFFERING UP THE USUAL PRC LINE ABOUT PEKING SUPPORTING PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONS, ETC. I CONCEDED UNDERSTANDING OF WHY PEKING WOULD BE CONCERNED THAT TRIBAL AREAS IN NORTHERN LAOS, THAILAND AND BURMA NOT HARBOR ANY FORCES HOSTILE TO PRC, AND I WAS ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN NEITHER BANGKOK AND RANGOON WERE DOING THAT. ON THE CONTRARY, THEY HAVE SOUTH T FOR SOME TIME TO HAVE GENUINELY AMICABLE RELATIONS WITH PEKING, BUT THAT THIS HAD NOT BEEN REALLY RECIPROCATED. CHU NODDED AND DID NOT PERSUE THIS LINE OF TALK.

6. HE SAID HIS GOVERNMENT FAVORED THE INDIAN OCEAN NUCLEAR FREE ZONE, SUGGESTING THAT THIS WOULD PERHAPS MAKE IT MORE CONFIDENTIAL

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DIFFICULT FOR THE SOVIETS TO DOMINATE THE INDIAN OCEAN. I SAID I WAS UNCLEAR AS TO WHAT WAS MEANT BY NUCLEAR FREE ZONE. NO ONE HAS GIVEN AN ADEQUATE EXPLANATION; AND IT WAS PARTICULARLY MYSTIFYING FOR THE PROPOSAL TO BE COMING FROM INDIA AFTER IT HAD EXPLODED ITS NUCLEAR DEVICE. INDEED THIS HAD CAUSED AUSTRALIANS AND OTHERS TO HAVE SECOND THOUGHTS. CHU LAUGHED.

7. IN CONCLUSION CHU EXPRESSED WITH SOME CONSIDERABLE WARMTH HIS HOPES FOR IMPROVING US-PRC RELATIONS, AND AGAIN MADE NO SECRET OF HIS CONCERN OVER THE RISE OF SOVIET POWER IN LIBYA, SOMALIA, INDIAN OCEAN AND SEA. HE NEVER MENTIONED OR SUGGESTED CHINESE CONCERN OVER CSCE, APOLLO-SOYUZ OR DETENTE. IF THERE WAS ANY RANCOR OR SUSPICION ON HIS SIDE, HE GAVE NO INDICATION OF IT. HIS PARTING WORDS RELATED TO HIS COUNTRY'S HOPE FOR EVER-IMPROVING US-PRC RELATIONS.
GREEN

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